



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN

USAID Assistance to Afghanistan

JANUARY 2006



PHOTO: USAID/AFGHANISTAN

This Alternative Livelihoods program provides employment and training to 200 women in Nangarhar province.

USAID SNAPSHOT

- 7.4 million Afghans now have improved access to basic health services.
- Provided funding, logistical, and technical support for the Bonn process, including the successful 2004 presidential elections.
- More than 170,000 students, both boys and girls, in an accelerated learning program to enable them to advance to age appropriate grade levels.
- Assisted the Ministry of Finance to surpass the IMF domestic revenue generation goal for 2004, an increase of 25% from 2003.
- Improved transport for 30% of Afghanistan's population by completing the Kabul-Kandahar highway.

OVERVIEW

Years of civil war, compounded by Taliban rule and the worst drought in memory, have devastated Afghanistan. At the time the Taliban was forced out of power, half of Afghanistan's people lived in absolute poverty and were unemployed. Virtually all the country's institutions and much of its infrastructure were destroyed. To support the war on terrorism and to keep with America's tradition of assisting those in need, USAID is working to build a safe, stable society that meets the needs of its people and eliminates an environment that breeds terrorism.

Agricultural Production Nearly Doubled

Agriculture is a way of life for 80 percent of Afghanistan's people. However, instability, coupled with the region's four-year drought, devastated the country's farms. USAID renovates irrigation systems, provides fertilizer and seeds and builds roads to markets. Over the past few years, agricultural production has nearly doubled, increasing farmers' incomes.

To stop the illegal drug trade that has been a major source of income for the country when there were few alternatives, USAID works with farmers to create alternatives to poppy cultivation. USAID also provides training, demonstration centers, and farm-related business training to farmers to help them increase their income from legitimate crops.

Girls Go Back to School and More Afghans Get Basic Health Care

In 2002, only about 32 percent of school-age children were enrolled. Ninety-seven percent of the country's girls did not attend school. Eighty percent of existing schools were either severely damaged or destroyed at the end of the Taliban rule. USAID has distributed textbooks, school supplies and training materials and has built or refurbished 477 schools. USAID has also trained 65,000 teachers, built a women's dormitory at Kabul University and provided food rations as an incentive for families to send their daughters to school.

The health status of Afghans is among the worst in the world. Roughly one out of every five Afghan children dies before the age of five, and about the number of mothers who die due to pregnancy complications is one of the highest rates in the world. USAID provides health services to more than two million people, 90 percent of whom are women and children. USAID has funded the treatment malaria and assisted in polio vaccinations for 9.9 million children.

Afghan Government and Economy Strengthened

Years of corruption, brutality and tyranny imposed by the Taliban reduced Afghanistan to political, economic and social ruin. USAID has supported the new democracy by registering 10 million Afghans to vote in the September 2004 presidential elections and the September 2005 Parliamentary elections. Our programs provided constitutional and legal experts to work with the committees drafting the constitution and new laws. USAID also funded a radio network to connect the central government with the remote provinces, so they can communicate reliably for the first time.

For years, Afghanistan had a dysfunctional economy based on illegal drug trading and war. USAID creates jobs to enable the Afghans to support their families and rebuild their country. USAID created short-term jobs for three million people and provided \$7 million in small to medium size loans to help Afghans start their own businesses, giving people jobs and incomes. USAID also helped convert the old currency to a new one by training staff, transporting money and providing counting machines.

All parts of the economy struggle when poor roads prevent the transport of goods or a shortage of clean water affects a community's health. USAID has rebuilt roads to clinics and markets and reopened the Salang Tunnel, high in the mountains, which has reduced travel time by two and half days for common trips. The reconstruction of 389 kilometers of the major Kabul-Kandahar highway has revitalized entire villages.

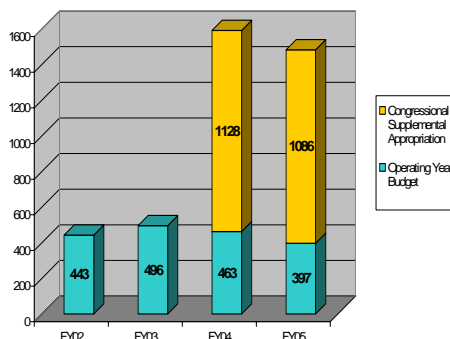


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AFGHANISTAN

USAID Assistance to Afghanistan (continued)

USAID Assistance to Afghanistan 2000-2005 (in millions)



FY 2005 USAID Assistance to Afghanistan

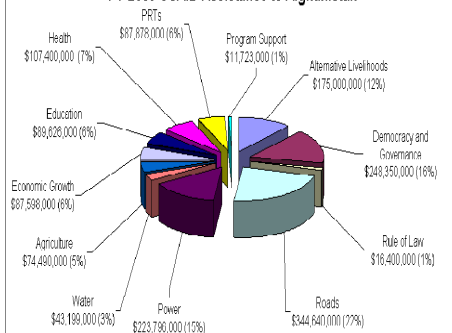


PHOTO: USAID

This skilled worker builds a brick wall to protect an orange orchard as part of a park refurbishment program in Jalalabad.

SECTORS

AGRICULTURE

In agriculture, USAID helps make sure communities have enough nutritious food to survive and grow agricultural economies. USAID links Afghan farmers to domestic and international markets by expanding trade, improving agricultural productivity and sustainability, harnessing science and technology, and strengthening education, farmer outreach and agricultural research.

ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS

USAID encourages farmers in Afghanistan's principal poppy-producing provinces to turn to other, legal ways of earning a living. Our efforts include improving infrastructure, increasing agricultural productivity and profitability, and providing financial incentives to stop poppy cultivation. While the focus is on the major poppy-producing provinces, our programs also support other provinces making real efforts to eliminate narcotics production.

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

A functioning, representative and broadly accepted national government is important in promoting national unity, reducing inter-group conflict, and curtailing extremism. To this end, USAID supported the recent Parliamentary and provincial elections. USAID continues to help re-establish and institutionalize the rule of law, build a functioning legislative branch, facilitate local government reform, and foster a viable civil society. Since a functioning, independent broadcast media is vital for civil participation, our projects provide training in fair and accurate reporting, and help develop a media policy and regulatory framework.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

To strengthen the economy and encourage investment, USAID assists the Government of Afghanistan in designing and implementing sound, transparent and predictable economic policies. This includes strengthening fiscal and monetary policy and financial management, as well as banking supervision and the legal framework for the financial, commercial, and trade sectors.

EDUCATION

In 2002, Afghanistan urgently needed school buildings, textbooks, teacher training, and accelerated programs for older students who had been denied an education under the Taliban. USAID responded to these needs and went beyond them to include radio-based teacher training, higher education programs, and training to develop a literate workforce.

HEALTH

USAID continues to expand access to quality basic health services for women and children, especially in rural and underserved areas. Coordinating with Afghanistan's Ministry of Health, USAID trains health professionals and uses public education campaigns to help Afghans protect their own health.

INFRASTRUCTURE

USAID has undertaken extensive construction and repair of infrastructure critical for development and national integration. This includes a major road system containing the 326 km Kandahar-Herat Highway, as well as provincial, district and rural roads and bridges. Other major projects are industrial parks, power plants, irrigation and flood control, schools and clinics.

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS

Provincial Reconstruction teams are joint civil-military units that strengthen the reach and legitimacy of the central government in outlying regions. These teams improve security facilitating reconstruction and development efforts nationwide.

On behalf of the American people, the U.S. government has provided humanitarian assistance and economic development to those in need around the world since the Marshall Plan.